

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 OSLO 01187 211559Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 211515Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9476

S E C R E T OSLO 1187

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS SECDEF FOR ACTION CAPTIONED FOR
SECRETARY SCHLESINGER FROM AMBASSADOR BYRNE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, MASS, OVIP, NO, NATO

SUBJECT: AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT: FOSTERVOLL VISIT

REFS: OSLO 11642 SECDEF 202332Z MAR 75 AND PREVIOUS

1. IN MOST POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT TO DATE, DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL INFORMED ME THAT BRIEFINGS OF LABOR PARTY, PARLIAMENTARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WENT EXTREMELY WELL AND THAT THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT IS NOW PREPARED TO SIGN THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE US AND THE FOUR CONSORTIUM PARTNERS AS WELL AS US LETTER OF OFFER BY MAY 15. THE DEFENSE MINISTER RECEIVED STRONG SUPPORT FROM PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI AND, SURPRISINGLY, FROM FINANCE MINISTER KLEPPE (KLEPPE WAS PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN COOL TO US VIEW ON AIRCRAFT REPLACEMENT) IN HIS APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO HAVE NORWAY ACQUIRE F-16 AND PARTICIPATE IN THE FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM ON BASIS OF MOU.

2. ALTHOUGH FULL STORTING (PARLIAMENT) MUST ENDORSE DECISION BEFORE MAY 15, FOSTERVOLL DOES NOT ANTICIPATE ANY SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES HERE. IN

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PRESENTING PROPOSAL TO STORTING, DEFENSE MINISTER

BELIEVES IT IS ESSENTIAL TO POINT OUT THE OPTION TO TERMINATE PARTICIPATION IN THE FOUR-NATION CONSORTIUM UNDER PENALTY, HOWEVER REMOTE THIS EVENTUALITY MAY APPEAR.

3. THUS THE MAIN PURPOSE FOR FOSTERVOLL'S TRIP TO THE US IS TO EXPLAIN IN PERSON TO SECRETARY SCHLESINGER WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED IN NORWAY, AND TO CLARIFY US-NORWEGIAN UNDERSTANDING ON REMOTE POSSIBILITY OF TERMINATION. IN ADDITION, THE MINISTER WILL WANT TO DISCUSS TACTICS FOR THE APRIL 3 MEETING, IN PARTICULAR CONSEQUENCES OF BELGIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CONSORTIUM, DETAILS OF STEPS TO BE TAKEN BETWEEN 4/3 AND 5/15, YOUR VIEWS ON IMPLICATIONS OF UK DEFENSE WHITE PAPER AND POSSIBLE NORWEGIAN ACQUISITION OF US-MANUFACTURED ROLAND II SHORAD SYSTEM.

4. FOSTERVOLL CONTINUES TO IMPRESS UPON ME THE EXTREME SENSITIVITY WITH WHICH HE REGARDS HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND THE MOST UNFORTUNATE IMPACT ON OTHER CONSORTIUM PARTNERS THAT COULD RESULT FROM ANY PUBLICITY OR PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRIP (FOSTERVOLL HAS GONE SO FAR AS TO BOOK HIS AIRLINE TICKETS IN OSLO ONLY AS FAR AS COPENHAGEN. HE IS ANXIOUS THAT HIS NAME NOT APPEAR INADVERTANTLY ON APPOINTMENT SCHEDULES IN WASHINGTON).

5. I AM PERSONALLY GRATIFIED AT THE WAY EVENTS ARE EVOLVING THUS FAR AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONFERRING WITH YOU IN WASHINGTON.
BYRNE

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED.

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NNN

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